

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE BOROUGH OF TOTNES.

Year 1949.

Mr. Mayor and Members of the Council,

A review of the year 1949 shows that a satisfactory standard of health has been maintained in the Borough. The beginning of the year found us just about to embark on a measles epidemic, which reached its peak at the end of January and the beginning of February, when 31 cases were notified in one week. The age group most affected was the 0 - 5 years. As far as can be ascertained, there were few complications amongst those affected and no fatal case was recorded. The epidemic was not followed by one of whooping cough, only 7 cases being notified during the year.

I am pleased to record that there has been no outbreak of acute anterior poliomyelitis. One sporadic case occurred in the month of June. This case, encephalitic in type, thereby producing a bulbar paralysis, proved fatal. No other member of the family fell victim to the disease.

4 cases of tuberculosis, all of which were pulmonary, have been notified during the year. This represents a slight improvement on the preceding year. The treatment of those affected and the supervision of contacts has been undertaken by the County Tuberculosis Officer.


Diphtheria Immunisation. This work has been shared by the family doctor and the Medical Officer at the fortnightly sessions of the Child Welfare Clinic. The subsequent immunisation of school children is carried out by the Medical Officer of the School and Minor Ailments Clinics. The Health Visitor and her assistant have done a very good job of work in checking up on the children of under 5, and so ensure that all of these receive their first course of injections. I think we come very near the 100% mark.

Vaccination. Vaccination is now carried out by the family doctor. There is still a steady demand for it, but I think it may very easily fall off if the public are not constantly reminded of the value of vaccination, even in what may appear an immune community.

Maternity. The maternity department of the Broomborough Hospital, with its up to date equipment and trained staff, is a valuable asset, and has now taken over the major part of our maternity work. Expectant mothers who are anxious to remain at home and have the required facilities are looked after by experienced midwives.

Hospitals. The Cottage Hospital, with its 17 beds, is a hive of industry, dealing with acute cases, both surgical and medical. The attendance of specialists at out-patient clinics at the Hospital is a very welcome addition to the hospital services in the town. Broomborough Hospital receives chronic patients, but more beds are required to meet the great demand for places here.

Nursing Services. Our two District Nurses continue their splendid work of attending the domiciliary cases. They work in the greatest harmony with the Health Visitor and her assistant and so help in the co-ordination of these services.



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Ambulance Service - A very efficient service indeed. Our two ambulances, together with hospital cars, provide us with all the transport we require at any time of the day or night.

Home Help Service. This service, launched last year, is still with us and has done some very useful work which has been much appreciated.

Birth Rate & Death Rate. The annual death rate is calculated at 11.8 per 1,000 population, and the birth rate 14.08 per 1,000 population. The figures are calculated on a civilian population of 5,680.

Water Supply. There is a constant and sufficient supply within the Borough. It is all chlorinated, but in some cases there is further treatment. The quality of the water is not plumbo-solvent and at least 98% of the houses and properties are serviced from the main. Owing to the increased number of properties brought about by post war housing, plans have been prepared for the enlargement of some of the distribution mains within the Borough, and this work is planned to take place during the next year. The summer was a particularly dry one, and 44,000,000 gallons were pumped from the Auxiliary Scheme as compared with 41,000,000 in 1948.

Signed:-

Elizabeth Davies.

Medical Officer of Health.

TOTNES.
November 1950.

